The Role of Landfills in Integrated Solid Waste Management Systems

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• Quasi-municipal corporation owned by the City of Caribou and the Towns of Limestone and Fort Fairfield
• Contracted with 30+ other communities with a total population served of approximately 35,000
• In 2013, we disposed of 25,765 tons of waste generated from within our region
• 20 recycling drop-off stations in 17 communities
Landfill operations began in 1977
Regional recycling program in early ’90s
Closed attenuation landfill in 1997 after construction of secure landfill cells
Subsequent improvements:
- Increased capacity
- Active gas extraction system
- Leachate transport pipeline
Today’s Landfills Are:

- Not the “dumps” of yesterday
  - Redundant composite liner systems
  - Liner performance monitoring
  - Leachate collection
  - Landfill gas extraction and re-use
  - Highly-regulated
- Adjustable in scale which allows flexibility
  - Build capacity for relatively short-term need
  - Accommodate changes in waste volume
  - Implement design improvements
  - Close
- A common component of an integrated waste management system
Waste Management Hierarchy Is

- A great public awareness tool
- Useful as a public policy guideline
- A worthwhile goal
Maine is a diverse state; geographically, demographically, and socio-economically.

WTE is a great option for regions with dense population, higher waste generation, and a lack of suitable landfill locations.

In rural, sparsely-populated regions, a secure landfill may be the better (and only) option.

Goals should be set, and planning should occur, regionally.
Municipal Service

- Municipalities are obligated by law to provide solid waste disposal for residents and businesses
- Incumbent upon municipal government to select the best option for that municipality
  - Mix of private and public options
- Less costly disposal = additional tax dollars for other uses
  - such as recycling programs, schools, recreation programs, road maintenance, social programs, etc.
  - or a reduced tax burden on citizens and businesses
Future

- Focus on upper rungs of hierarchy
- Facilitate a process to identify State policy or practice options that benefit all Maine residents
Questions?

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